wheat imported during 1996-97 and 1997-98 are given below:—

Year	Country	Quantity
1996-97	Australia	13.90
	Canada	2.66
	Argentina	0.95
	Total	17.51
1997-98	Australia	2.42

(b) Minimum Support Price (MSP) for wheat is fixed by the Government on the basis of recommendations made by the Commission for Agricultural Costs & Prices (CACP) which takes into account the cost of cultivation and a reasonable margin of profit to the farmer. The MSP for wheat was raised by Rs. 35 per quintal for 1997-98 rabi marketing season. A Central bonus of Rs. 60 per quintal has also been allowed over and above the MSP of wheat payable to the farmers. The FCI procures wheat under the Price Support Scheme at the prices fixed by the Government. The farmers are free to sell their produce to the FCI or other Government Agencies at the procurement prices fixed or sell it in the open market at higher prices. During 1996-97 FCI sold wheat in the open market at prices lower than the economic cost.

(c) There has not been any export of wheat during the last one year on Government accounts. Some quantity of wheat was exported during 1996-97 from the open market at prices ranging between US $160 to 192 per MT FOB. The prices of wheat imported during 1996-97 ranged between US $ 148 to 186 per MT FOB in respect of Australian wheat, US $ 152.50 per MT FOB in respect of Candadian wheat and US $ 173 per MT C&F in respect of Argentinian wheat.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Substandard foodgrains supplied through PDS

513. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that very substandard quality foodgrains are being supplied to the consumers through PDS in the country, particularly in Gujarat;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have conducted surprise checks on FCI godowns and Fair Price Shops to unearth the supply of substandard foodgrains to the consumers;

(d) if so, the details thereof for the last two years, State-wise and year-wise; and

(e) the steps Government propose to take to ensure good quality foodgrains supply to the consumers through PDS in the country particularly in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) Public Distribution System (PDS) is implemented under the joint responsibility of Central and State Governments. The operational responsibility for implementing the PDS rests with the State/UT Administrations. This Department has not received any major complaint about sub-standard quality of foodrains being distributed to consumers through PDS including Gujarat.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Surprise checks were conducted in the FCI godowns at Sabarmati and Mehsana during July, 97 and shortcomings observed in these godowns were communicated to FCI for taking remedial action.

(e) Following steps have been taken by the government to ensure good quality of foodgrains to consumer through PDS in the country.

(i) Only A&B category wheat and PDS stocks of rice conforming to PFA standards are issued for PDS.

(ii) Sealed type samples of foodgrains from issuing lots of foodgrains are also supplied to State Governments by FCI so that these may be displayed in the Fair Price Shops.

(iii) Representatives of State Governments are allowed to check the quality of the foodgrains prior to issue.

Sufficient stock of foodgrains for doubling quantity of foodgrain under TPDS

514. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government holds sufficient stock of foodgrains to double present quantity of ten Kg. per family per month under Targeted Public Distribution System to serve the poorer section of the society, if subsidy provided;

(b) whether Government is also considering to increase the allocation to Below Poverty Line (BPL) families from ten Kg. per family per month to twenty Kg. per family per month by excluding the non-poor families from the provision of PDS, at least as far as the foodgrains are concerned; and

(c) whether Government of Tamil Nadu is not expediting lifting of foodgrains allocated to it particularly the quota meant for below poverty line families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No Sir.

(b) No Sir.

(c) Lifting of foodgrains by the State Government, particularly the quota meant for Below Poverty Line (BPL) families has improved considerably in the months of August and September, 1997 compared to the lifting in June and July, 1997. Lifting of BPL quota was 36,870 tonnes (80.52% of the BPL allocation) in September, 1997 compared to 9,620 tonnes (21.01%) in June, 1997.

Foodgrains stocked by FCI

515. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that rice worth Rs. 3.68 crore was found rotting at a FCIs godown in Delhi;

(b) if so, the total quantity of rice found to be not consumable for TPDS;

(c) the total quantity of foodgrains stocked in FCI godowns all over India, including the total amount of not consumable foodgrains which are rotting as on date;

(d) whether there was a gap of 18 percent between the procurement and disbursement of foodgrains by the FCI and that this 18 percent of foodgrains was lost in wastage; and

(e) if so, the action taken by Government to prevent the wastage of foodgrains at FCI godowns?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the House.

Medical fraud at Super Bazar

516. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to the report appearig in the Times of India dated 30th September, 1997 highlighting